

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 BRIDGE 01921 160615Z  
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01  
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02  
SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 TRSE-00 OPR-02 SCS-03 /079 W  
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FM AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3378  
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRIDGETOWN 1921

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, SC  
SUBJECT: NEVIS SECESSION REFERENDUM SCHEDULED FOR 18 AUGUST

1. AS THE NEXT STEP TOWARD THEIR LONG THREATENED BREAK WITH ST. KITTS, THE POLITICAL LEADERSHIP OF NEVIS HAS PLANNED A REFERENDUM ON SECESSION FOR 18 AUGUST. ALTHOUGH NEITHER WE NOR THE BRITISH OFFICIALS HERE HAVE SEEN THE ACTUAL WORDING OF THE BALLOT QUESTION, IT IS EXPECTED TO POSIT AN OUTRIGHT COMPLETE SEPARATION FROM ST. KITTS.

2. IN RECENT PUBLIC STATEMENTS KITTITIAN OFFICIALS HAVE EMPHASIZED THAT THE POLL IS NEITHER SANCTIONED NOR BINDING ON THE GOSK. BUT, AS FAR AS WE KNOW, PREMIER BRADSHAW'S GOVERNMENT HAS NOT YET ANNOUNCED ANY INTENT TO PROHIBIT THURSDAY'S BALLOTING. THE BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION HERE, HOWEVER, HAS CONFIRMED NEVISIAN CLAIMS THAT THE ST. KITTS DEFENCE FORCE CONTINGENT IN NEVIS HAS BEEN AUGMENTED AND SUPPLIED WITH TWO HEAVY MACHINE GUNS AND AN UNKNOWN QUANTITY OF LIGHT MORTARS.

3. DURING THE WEEK OF 8-14 AUGUST THE FCO ASKED THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVE IN ST. LUCIA (ERIC LETOCQ) FOR HIS ASSESSMENT OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SERIOUS  
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PAGE 02 BRIDGE 01921 160615Z

VIOLENCE RESULTING FROM THE REFERENDUM. TETOCQ'S REPLY, BASED LARGELY ON THE REPORTING OF HIS DEPUTY STATIONED IN ANTIGUA, IS REPORTED TO BE CAUTIOUSLY HOPEFUL THAT A SERIOUS OUTBREAK ON REFERENDUM DAY CAN BE AVOIDED. HIS GUARDED OPTIMISM IS APPARENTLY BASED LARGELY ON THE FACT PREMIER BRADSHAW HAS UNEXPECTEDLY DECLINED SQUARELY TO MEET THE CHALLENGE TO HIS AUTHORITY BY

PROSCRIBING THE REFERENDUM.

4. IN LIGHT OF THE POTENTIAL FOR VIOLENCE IN NEVIS AND POSSIBLE ACCOMPANYING DANGER TO A SMALL NUMBER OF U.S. CITIZEN VISITORS AND RESIDENTS, THE POST HAS REVIEWED THE PORTION OF THE E&E PLAN COVERING ST. KITTS-NEVIS. WE HAVE ALSO ASKED THE U.S. NAVAL FACILITY IN NEARBY ANTIGUA TO REPORT IMMEDIATELY ANY DISTURBANCES ON NEVIS.

5. COMMENT: BASED ON PREMIER BRADSHAW'S PERFORMANCE DURING ANGUILLA'S SUCCESSFUL SECESSION AND HIS MORE RECENT THREATS TO "CRUSH" NEVIS' ATTEMPT TO FOLLOW SUIT, WE ARE SOMEWHAT PUZZLED BY HIS FAILURE THUS FAR TO BAN THE REFERENDUM. HE COULD STILL DO SO, OF COURSE, BUT THE BRITISH ESTIMATE IS THAT HE WON'T. IF THE VOTE IS ULTIMATELY FORBIDDEN, THE NEVISIANS MAY WELL TRY TO PROCEED ANYWAY AND THEN VIOLENCE TO SOME DEGREE WOULD BE ALMOST UNAVOIDABLE. A SUCCESSFUL (I.E. "YES" VOTE FOR SECESSION) POLL WOULD MEAN THE ST. KITTS GOVERNMENT WILL NO LONGER BE ABLE TO ARGUE THAT NEVISIANS DON'T REALLY WANT A BREAK.

6. AS WE'VE REPORTED PREVIOUSLY, THE NEVISIANS WANT TO BREAK WITH ST. KITTS PRIOR TO THE LARGER ISLAND'S OWN INDEPENDENCE FROM THE U.K. AND AGAIN BECOME--LIKE ANGUILLA--AN OUTRIGHT BRITISH COLONY. THE NEVISIAN LEADERSHIP HAS NO DESIRE FOR INDEPENDENCE UNLESS NATIONHOOD IS CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BRIDGE 01921 160615Z

THE ONLY ALTERNATIVE TO WHAT THEY CONSIDER "NEOCOLONIALIST" EXPLOITATION UNDER BRADSHAW.  
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## Message Attributes

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**Review Markings:**  
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